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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 378
By Person

A RESOLUTION To honor Thomas N. Southard for his fourteen years of commendable service at St. Mary's Episcopal School.

WHEREAS, It is fitting that the members of this legislative body should pause in their deliberations to pay tribute to those estimable citizens who have dedicated their professional lives to the growth and development of our State's most precious natural resource: our children; and

WHEREAS, The venerable Headmaster of St. Mary's Episcopal School, Thomas N. Southard, will soon be leaving St. Mary's to serve as President of Shady Side Academy, a private school near Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, St. Mary's Episcopal School is an exemplary all girl Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade school in Memphis, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Tom Southard, a great proponent of single-sex education, has served St. Mary's with the greatest distinction for fourteen years, performing his duties as Headmaster with integrity, wisdom, and kindness; and

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WHEREAS, During Mr. Southard's progressive tenure, St. Mary's Episcopal School has undergone remarkable growth and change; the school's endowment has been increased from one million dollars to seven million dollars, which has significantly enhanced the school's need-based financial aid budget and provided for the addition and enhancement of many other praiseworthy programs; and

WHEREAS, The school has also experienced an increase in student enrollment of 33%, the addition of thirteen new classrooms, the renovation of the Middle and Upper School science facilities, and the construction of the Mertie W. Buckman Performing and Fine Arts Center with Rose Theater and the Margaret R. Hyde Activity Center with Willmott Gymnasium; and

WHEREAS, Thomas N. Southard has also been instrumental in the installation of new curriculum and faculty at St. Mary's, including the appointment of learning skills specialists, counselors, and a Director of Studies for the Upper School; the assignment of a Chaplain and Assistant Chaplain to the Religious Education faculty; an increase in science and technology course requirements; and the addition of the Buckman World Tour Concert Series, the Artist in Residence Program, and a pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade character education program; and

WHEREAS, In addition to serving as Headmaster, Tom Southard also taught Economics and the Blessed are the Peacemakers Class, a course which focused on violence, peace, and conflict resolution; as a teacher, he demonstrated remarkable skill and enthusiasm, as well as an inherent respect for both his students and the subject matter; and

WHEREAS, This accomplished administrator has led St. Mary's Episcopal School to achieve matchless levels of excellence; in 1990, the Upper School was declared a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Southard was named the "Local Hero" by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation for the meritorious efforts that he and the students, faculty, and staff of St. Mary's have expended in the fight against breast cancer; for six years in a row, St. Mary's has

registered more participants in the Memphis Race for the Cure than any other school in the region; and

WHEREAS, Whether Thomas N. Southard was addressing the day-to-day operation of the school, teaching in the classroom, raising funds for the endowment, or performing his countless other duties as headmaster, he carried himself with the utmost decorum; his strength of character, enthusiasm, and persistence earned him the respect and approbation of the students, faculty, staff, and Board of St. Mary's Episcopal School; and

WHEREAS, James C. Warner, former Chairman of the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's, has said of Tom Southard: "His legacy is not only the new bricks and mortar left on the campus, ...but also the expanded diversity within the SMS family and the enhanced respect within our educational community...It was truly an inspiration, education, and privilege to work side by side with Tom"; and

WHEREAS, For fourteen years, Mr. Southard has ably guided St. Mary's Episcopal School, and although he will soon no longer serve as Headmaster, his imprint on St. Mary's and its students, faculty, curriculum and programs will indelibly remain a positive force for change and growth; he has ensured that St. Mary's is one of the best schools in this State; and

WHEREAS, This General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud Thomas N. Southard for his admirable dedication and stalwart service to St. Mary's Episcopal School; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor Tom Southard for his meritorious service to St. Mary's Episcopal School, applaud his fourteen years of diligent, compassionate, and conscientious service as headmaster, and express our appreciation for all his efforts on behalf of the youth of this State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish Mr. Southard much joy in his new position as President of Shady Side Academy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.